

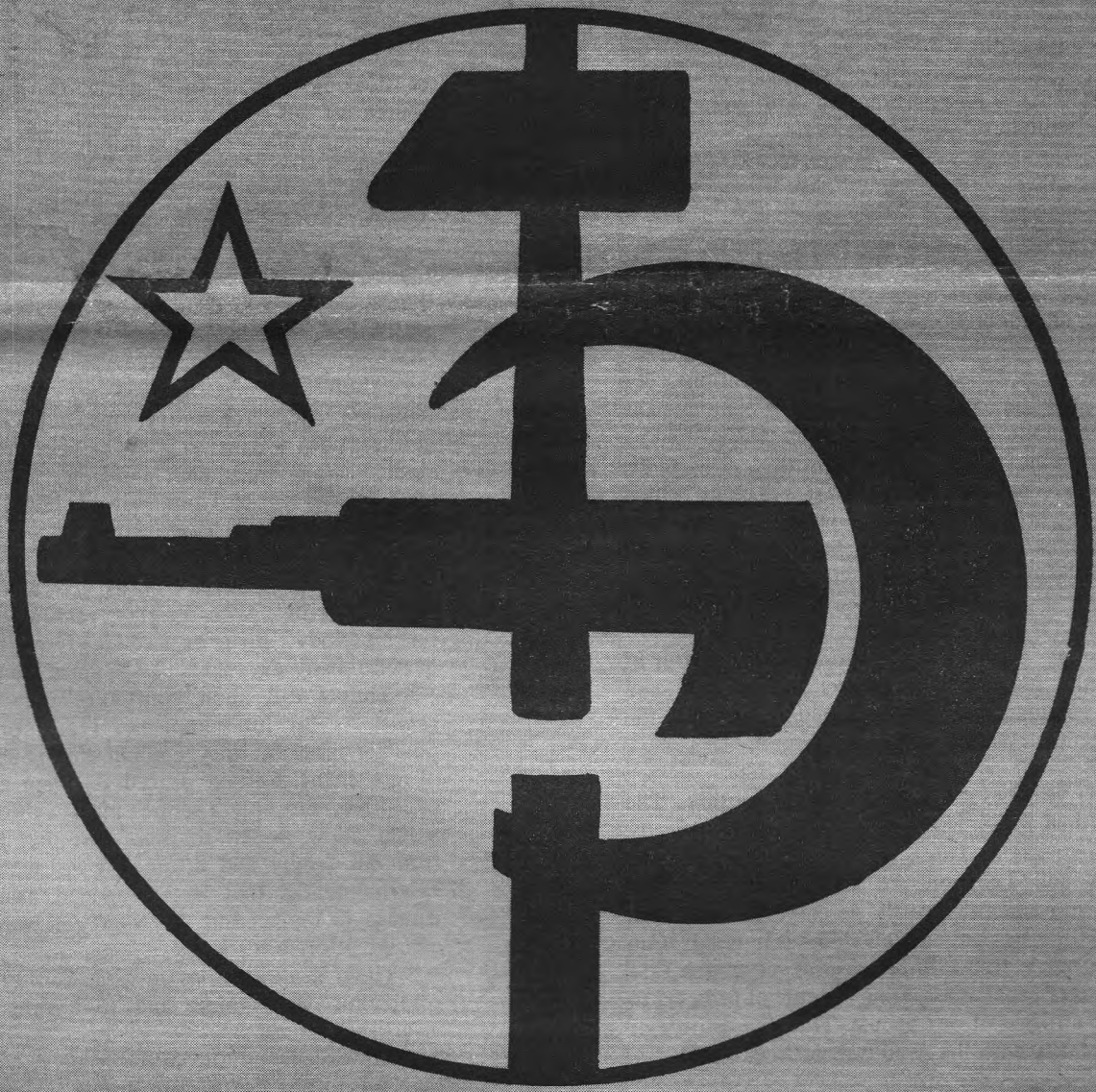
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PALESTINE RESISTANCE BULLETIN

FEBRUARY- MARCH

NO.12

IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE ARAB REVOLUTION



EDITORIAL:

The third anniversary of the birth of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) fell on Feb. 21, 1972. The historic days of February 1969 represent an event as important as the birth of the Palestinian Resistance Movement (PRM) itself. Marxism, the working class ideology, assumed its revolutionary role in guiding and engaging the struggling exploited classes of the Arab people. Until then, Marxism was vulgarized by the revisionist practices of the Arab Communist Parties and the slogonering of the 'left' wing of the petty-bourgeois regimes ruling in many Arab states.

Equally important was the role shouldered by the DPFLP consequent to its birth. The PRM entered a stage of crises at the turn of the year 1968. The emotional outrage unleashed by the defeat of June 1967 had been pretty well depleted. The Arab regimes by then regained some of their strength and began their drawn out race to out bid the PRM, in their effort to reestablish their total hegemony in the area. Above all the toiling classes and refugees have been largely relegated back to the role of spectators, rather than participants, in the political struggle for creating a new Middle East. The movement till then had not formulated a program of action to engage the exploited classes in a political struggle to seize power in favor of the anti-imperialist and national democratic struggle against the Israeli state apparatus and its allies of Arab reactionaries and imperialist interests. The task bordered on the impossible; but the DPFLP did not relent.

The Democratic Socialist solution to the Palestinian issue was one of its first efforts to give direction to the struggle. The attempt to broaden the struggle to a Jordanian - Palestinian VS. a solely Palestinian struggle was among the initial tasks undertaken by the DPF. Giving social context to the national liberation struggle waged by the Palestinian people was, and still is, viewed as an issue inseparable from armed struggle. Peoples council, Popular militia, and Palestinian-Jordanian trade union were only the more visible forms that engaging and organizing the toiling classes took through out that period.

Many of these achievements are now buried under the ashes of September 1970 and July 1971. That these achievements were short lived in no ways diminishes their historic value as rehearsals to the day of victory that is bound to come at the hands of the working class and its allied classes throughout the Middle East. The debacles of September and July once again expose the fragility and incompetence of a petty-bourgeois program to lead the popular movement in the Middle East.

Consequent to the defeat of July 1971 counter revolutionary forces intensified their thrust to eradicate the revolutionary movement. The tasks of building a working class revolutionary party and continue the effort of engaging the toiling classes in the struggle are even more pressing, it is important to note that because of the defeat in the Palestinian theatre counter revolution attacked on all fronts of the Arab world. The movement to the right in Egypt was accompanied by a final surrender to the interests of International Capital to the point of excepting Israeli conditions. The counter revolution in Sudan staged a bloody coup de'tat to eliminate the most dedicated and the most militant anti-imperialist hopes. Unsatisfied by its exploits the Sudani military fascists struck a shameful deal with the disgusting monarch in the South - in Ethiopia. The deal was made behind the back, and at expense, of the Eritrian People's struggle. In all that, the young colonel of Libya played his designed role so perfectly that he was rewarded by some extra oil revenues to help him continue the monkey business.

In the Arab Gulf "solutions" were simpler to implement in favour of counter revolution. The only remaining thorn to oil interest and (Shahshahy) Iranian role of guardian angel is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the occupied Arab Gulf.

This counter revolution is not exactly progressing smoothly. The students strike in Egypt unleashed forces beyond the imaginative capacity of the Sadat clique. Students strikes in Tunis, and a visible student and workers discontents in Syria and Lebanon are signs of the currents underneath. The Palestinian movement, though defeated is far from liquidated. The struggle in the gulf is not only undefeated but in fact it is on the ascent. In short the fierce struggle against imperialism is very much alive and shall succeed. To this aim this paper is assuming the role of bringing to the English speaking world the struggle of our people. Thus the subtitle of the paper is changed to "In solidarity with the Arab Revolution".

The Editors hope to consistently have an issue available to the readers every two months.

POLITICAL PRISONERS

According to Israel's Ministry of Defence there are 3687 Palestinian political prisoners in Israel. Saleh Ra'afat, member of the Executive Committee of Palestine Liberation Organization; and Tayseer al-Zabri, member of the General Secretarian of Jordan's National Union of Students, are imprisoned together with thousands of political prisoners in Jordan. Fatimah Ibra-hem, President of the Sudanese Women Union, and member of the Presidency of the World Union of Democratic Women, is a political prisoner with thousands of others in Sudan. Write to UN Secretary General, UN Building, N.Y., demanding the release of political prisoners, and ask him to convey your demand to the governments concerned.

Letter on Israeli Prisoner

TORTURE AND POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ISRAEL

PRB - Below is a translation of a letter by Attorney F. Langer sent to the Israeli authorities as a result of torturing her client A. A. Seouri. The letter was published in al-Ittihad on October 26th, 1971. Seouri's case is one of the very few that have been made public. Palestinian political prisoners, in hundreds, are facing similar fate. PRB calls upon all its readers to come to the defence of political prisoners in Palestine by sending letters of protest to the United Nations, and Israeli authorities.

* * * * *

October 22nd, 1971

Minister of Defence,
Minister of Police,
Subject: Complaint on torture during investigation with Abd al-Jabeer Abd Allah Seouri - Hebron.

My client, named above, was arrested in Hebron on August 26th, 1971. He is imprisoned according to an Administrative Detention Order, in Hebron Prison to this date. I tried several times to meet with him, yet fifty days to his imprisonment had passed and I had not succeeded in meeting with him.

Despite the approval of the deputy governor, I was unable to meet with my client on October 14th, 1971. I was prevented under the pretext of a variety of excuses. Yet these excuses made me doubt the fate of my client. At that same day I sent a-complaint to the Minister of Police on the matter.

After several days I was able to meet with my client in Hebron Prison on October 21st, 1971. And to my regret I have to point out that what my client informed me makes true all my doubts.

He informed me to what happened to him during the investigation in Hebron: after his arrest he was taken to the investigation room where he was beaten up and hit on his face and body by a number of men whom he does not know their name. During part of the time when he was beaten up, his eyes were covered. Other arrested persons were brought to the room, while he was continuously being hit, he was pressured to state that he brought money from Amman to those people. When he denied such allegations, however, the investigators continued hitting him until he was unable to hear with his right ear. Then the investigators asked him to strip. While naked, his hands were tied to his back with a rope and raised together with his body off the floor, in a manner unknown previously to my client. He was, then, hit on his testicles. With each hit he was ordered to "speak". When he said that he had nothing to confess to, they continued hitting him, as he pointed out.

After this investigation, my client was thrown into a cell. He remained there for thirty one days without allowing him to change clothes, have a bath, or see sun light. While his body was thrown to the floor, shaking from pain and cold, all that he had were light blankets. Here I have to point out that my client is 25 years old, and suffers from respiratory ailment. Throughout this period he was not given any medical care.

During my interview with my client, he pointed out to me that he still cannot hear with his right ear due to the hitting. As for other marks on his body, such as swollen face and body they have disappeared because many days have passed since his torturing and investigations.

Thus I call upon your excellency to provide medical care to my client. As for his complaints I ask for an investigation in the nearest possible time, for they contain serious allegations against the investigators of my client. Certain procedures were used with my client that are not permitted, and only a serious investigation can put an end to them. And I would allow myself to point out that hiding my client for fifty days, from his family and attorney gives substance to his claims. As for the external marks that have remained, from his being beaten up, i.e. the damage to his hearing, my client can prove that he suffered from no such damage prior to his arrest.

Thus, I ask for an investigation of my client's serious and actual complaints, as I think, and to inform me of the results of such an investigation.

His excellency the Minister of Police pointed out more than once that we do not use torture during investigations. This claim necessitates, with all due respect, an intervention in the above incident. And I am awaiting this.

F. Langer

CORRECTIONS

Due to our small staff and limited resources there have been errors in our translations, which we hope our readers have noticed. In our November 1971 issue, however, an important mistake in our translation of "Nayef Hawatmeh Speech in Iraq", page four, paragraph four, line one, was made. It read, "These subjective diseases have shaped the objective conditions of our people." However, it should have read, "These subjective diseases fell on their objective foundations where approximately. . . ." Also on the same page, paragraph three, line eleven, it should read "i.e. in radicalizing the Arab. . ." The purpose of this note is not to list all possible corrections, rather it is to apologize to our readers, and acknowledge our limitations. Promising at the same time to correct the situation, with the help of our readers.



THE DEMOCRATIC POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE

ENTERS 4TH YEAR

All the Palestinian revolutionary forces are called upon to extricate the resistance from the present crisis. No, to the devisive rightist policy. Yes, to the policy of national unity, the unity of the wings of the Arab national revolution against the enemies of the Arab nation as our road to the long protracted war.

Masses of our people,
Revolutionaries of Palestine,
Arab progressives and revolutionaries,

On February 22, 1969 the left wing of the Palestine Resistance Movement, represented by the DPFLP, declared its organizational, political and ideological independence from the right wing.

And in February 1972 this left wing enters its 4th year and the progressive and leftist tendencies are growing and consolidating more and more within the ranks of the revolution of the Palestinian people, and these tendencies are extending in various degrees into the ranks of all of the resistance organizations, without exception. At the same time, the masses of our people move, day after day, toward the position of a broad national resistance to the policy of the right wing of the resistance movement, as seen when the masses and the organizations of trade unions and craftsmen declared their rejection of "the Jeddah negotiations" and "the Egyptian-Saudi mediation" between the revolution and its reactionary murderers.

These developments open, in the near and middle future, the beginnings of new revolutionary horizons for the extrication of the revolution from its present subjective and objective crisis which have been carried within the revolution since the beginning of the launching of guerrilla activities.

— These developments are opening the road for the meeting of all the revolutionary, democratic and leftist forces within the ranks of the resistance organizations along a path of an united program which will put an end to the shaking and retreating of the right wing's leaderships within the resistance, will push the wheel of the national revolutionary unity forward and will build the dynamic dialectical relation between the wings of the Arab revolution (the resistance and the Arab liberation movements) in order to engage the mutual struggle against the primary contradiction with imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction in the whole Arab nation.

Masses of our nation,
Fighters of the resistance,

The practical experience is the one which uncovered — and still uncovers — the continuous bankruptcy and incompetence of the policy of the rightist wings in the resistance, on all the levels, Palestinian, Arab and international.

— On the level of national unity the right of the resistance with all its wings rejected all the revolutionary proposals for building a stable national unity, whereas the DPFLP introduced in September 1969 to the 6th Palestine National Congress a proposal for a "united Palestine National Liberation Front" and it also introduced after September 1970, precisely in July 1971, a proposal for "the growth of a united People's Liberation Army for the Palestine Revolution", but the right wing of the resistance understands national unity within the context of a reactionary policy of "annexation and subordination", far removed from the revolutionary and democratic relations between the forces of the revolution, thus looking for rightist subjectgation and organizational gains first and before all.

— On the level of confronting the reactionary regime in Jordan, the right wing gave the initiative to the reactionary authority, in the form of a golden opportunity for launching a campaign of encirclement and liquidation of the resistance and the armed masses in September 1970 and July 1971 and rejected the call to take the initiative to paralyze the reactionary military campaigns by taking an offensive defensive policy and resolving the contradiction with reactionary regime in favor of Palestinian-Jordanian people and revolution. Instead the right wing took a policy of passive resistance and one step forward and two steps backward in the struggle which took place with reaction. The right wing rejected its commitment to the decision of the special 8th National Palestinian Congress on August 27, 1970 which called for "the immediate work toward the transformation of the East Bank of the Jordan River into a stable base and national fortress for the Palestine revolution. — On the level of the relation with the wings of the Arab revolution (the resistance and the Arab liberation movements) the right wing practiced its relations with the people of the Arab nation and their national revolutionary forces through its relations with the Arab regimes (national) bourgeoisie and reaction instead of through the inevitable alliance with the Arab liberation movements and all its wings for the opening of the struggle against the enemies of national liberation... the enemies of the liberation of Palestine. The left wing of the resistance introduced from the beginning the fact that the particularities of the Palestinian cause are its unity of the struggle against Zionism, imperialism and Arab reaction, the defeat of Israel and occupation are tied to the

continuous infliction of defeats to imperialism and reaction in the Arab nation in general and the Arab East in particular, and according to one of Nasser's expression's "fighting Israel and those who are behind Israel at the same time." — On the international level, the right wing dealt with the forces of the socialist camp, the international national liberation movement and the working class movement in the capitalist countries with caution and strong hesitation. And limited itself to verbal declarations about the characteristics of the Palestinian revolution to the camp of international revolution while, at the same time, extending more than a hand to more than one Arab reactionary regime. This while a revolutionary position demands strict alliance to the side of the anti-imperialist, anti-reaction and anti-Zionist camp in the Arab world and internationally.

This was the outcome of the past years and we witness today the serious retreats in the path of the revolution which have opened gaping holes for conspiracies and operations by the Israeli state, the Arab reactionaries and the imperialists against the Palestinian national cause and the people's armed movement.

Masses of our people,
Heroic fighters of the resistance,

The attempt to cleanse the Palestinian cause and the revolutionary movement will not, and will never, stop. Also the repulsing of Zionist, reactionary and imperialist attacks and the infliction of defeats upon the camp of counter-revolution which is against "Palestine" Arab liberation movement is dependent to a large extent upon the resolution of the subjective crisis of the resistance organizations and the dynamic relation with the other wing of the Arab revolution (the Arab liberation movement) in all its different political and ideological positions.

This demands from all progressives and revolutionaries in all the resistance movement a united struggle for: — Putting an end to the devisive and individualistic policies which are conducted by the right wing leaderships in the resistance which manifested themselves by the taking of individualistic decisions in the name of all the resistance movement concerning national and essential issues. The rightist leadership had on one hand torn up the decision of the 9th National Palestinian Congress concerning the rejection of negotiations with the reactionary regime in Amman, they also tore up the report of the Executive Committee to the Arab regimes on January 26, 1971 which declared a boycott upon the rulers in Amman. Also they tore up the work of building national alliances on a revolutionary basis which would blockade the way of the reactionary conspiracies to liquidate the resistance in stages gradually as attempted by the Saudi reactionary ally of the puppet regime in Amman.

— Foiling the Israeli and Amman reactionaries attempts to separate or divide the Palestinian cause, geographically and population-wise, that is the Israeli attempt to create a group with a Palestinian identity (the municipal election in the West Bank is one of the concrete aspects of these attempts) co-existing with Israel in the form of self-autonomous rule under the shadow of occupation, as a preparation for the division of the unity of the home land and the Palestinian cause and the creation of a state entity on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip which will recognize Israel and give up to it half of the home land. In addition, this entity will be under the threat of the Israeli military or at its mercy, as the spearhead of Zionist economic penetration into the Arab countries.

At the same time, the puppets of King Hussein will enter into an agreement with His government. The municipal elections in the West Bank and the context of self-autonomy under the protection of the Hashimite Kingdom as the pretext by which the Kingdom will in return conclude a final package deal of the Palestinian cause with the state of Israel.

— Building the Palestinian-Jordan National Front is the method for struggling with the reactionary regime in the East Bank and for grasping our people's national rights as well as the national and democratic rights for the people of the East Bank under the banner of a national democratic regime, which will be a guarantee for the people's unity and a guarantee for the connection of both Banks. This connection will block the path of the reactionary regionalist and separatist tendencies among the people of both Banks.

— Building the bridges of daily and dynamic relations with all the segments of the Arab liberation movement for the unity of the struggle against the primary contradiction in the whole Arab nation with Zionism, imperialism and local Arab reaction. The avoidance of these relations by continuing the relations with the Arab reactionary regimes and by compromising will be at the expense of the local and national cause.

The practicing of strict alliance of the resistance with the camp of the international front hostile to imperialism, Zionism and reaction is necessary.

Fighters of the resistance,
Our Masses,

The correction of the path of the resistance movement and its development will begin first, in a meeting of all true revolutionaries and patriots in all wings of the resistance movement far removed from the blind organizational sectarianism in order to put forth a united program that will bring in all the true revolutionaries and true nationalists under one united National Liberation Front that will impose on the right wings in the resistance the new revolutionary path.

Revolutionaries of Palestine Unite!
Long live the unity of all the Palestinian revolutionaries and nationalist forces.

Democratic Popular Front for the
Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP)
February 1972

DPFLP: Interview on International Position



Comrade Nayef Hawatmeh
Secretary-General of the DPFLP Political Bureau

—Defining the views of the DPFLP on:

The existing international conditions

The relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China

The relations with the Arab Communist parties

Q. What, in your opinion, are the principal characteristics of the existing international conditions; particularly the conditions of the international liberation movement and the socialist revolution?

A. Where as before the second World War socialism was confined in the Soviet Union, there have been many developments since then that have led to the birth of a broad socialist camp.

Secondly, there has been a powerful emergence of the national liberation movement in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as, the consolidation of the conditions of the working class in the capitalist countries.

These distinctive phenomena in our contemporary history have widely opened the doors for the achievement of a total victory over colonialism and imperialism in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. They have also pushed forward, in great steps, the cause of the international socialist revolution.

We observe, at the same time, that this anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and anti-reactionary international front has suffered broad relapses, particularly after the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. That 20th Congress dealt with many of the questions and problems of the socialist revolution, the multiplicity of ways of reaching socialism in the anti-imperialism struggle, and that Congress saw the introduction of the theory of "peaceful co-existence" with the various social systems.

These topics have clearly effected the solidarity of the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and anti-reactionary international front. It has, also, effected the internal relations within the ranks of the international communist movement, the relations between the international communist movement and the national liberation movements and the (political) conditions of the working class in the capitalist countries.

The international front, as a result of the developments which followed the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was shaken and the relationships among these forces was confused. This has led to a hesitation and complexity which has effected the overall struggle against imperialism and colonialism.

It has been observed that imperialism and its lackey, international reaction, have worked to gain maximum benefit from the policy of "peaceful co-existence" and the belief of the saying that "a variety of roads lead to socialism." These policies have consequently led to the

encouragement of reformist and social democratic trends, especially in the capitalist countries, in the ranks of the revolutionary forces and in the worker's forces.

Therefore, imperialism could move from a defensive position in the struggle against the forces of national liberation throughout the world and the forces of the international socialist revolution to an offensive position against this international front. This move enabled the imperialists, by exploiting the international situation, to accomplish reactionary imperialist victories over the national liberation movement in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Additionally, the American and West German neo-colonialist forces have gradually been replacing the old colonialist powers of Britain, France, etc. on these continents.

Imperialism has not only rushed into plotting counter-revolutionary action and reactionary coups in the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but has also waged, what is termed by American politicians, particularly former Secretary of State, John F. Dulles, as, "private wars and limited warfare" throughout the world. These are being waged in an attempt to defeat the forces which are rising against colonialism and imperialism, and this attempt is what we are witnessing in Indochina, in general, and in Vietnam, in particular.

However, imperialism has not been contented at plotting more counter revolutions, coups and attacks on the liberation forces throughout the world. Imperialism has also endeavored to sabotage and encircle the worker's movement in the capitalist countries, and it has further gone to the extreme by attacking the countries of the socialist camp for it has bombarded the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, a part of the socialist camp.

Imperialism has gone even further than that and plotted counter-revolutions in the socialist countries, as happened in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and previously, in Hungary. Thus exploiting to its advantage the general economic, political and democratic problems in the socialist countries, in order to organize counter-coups and revolts.

Presently, we observe that the basic characteristics of our contemporary time is the intensification of the attacks by imperialism, colonialism and international reaction and the increase of disjointedness among the ranks of the anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist international front.

We can further observe that imperialism is achieving victories over the forces of national liberation in more than one country and is daily creating semi-permanent problems for the socialist countries, as well as, waging limited wars in order to halt the international, socialist, revolutionary march and the march of the national liberation movements. Movements which are struggling to inflict total defeat upon imperialism and colonialism.

We observe, on the other hand, a series of international concessions to imperialism and the encirclement of problem areas which are foci of tensions in the world.

We observe, also, a current, based on the policy of "co-existence" in international politics, intent on liquidating the problem area of tension in the world. We saw this happen in Europe with the Soviet Union-West German treaty and the Polish-West German treaty, these asserted the outcome of World War II. There are still attempts occurring to resolve the Berlin question, these simultaneously with attempts to peacefully resolve the Middle East problem. Here we cannot but observe that the resolution of these problems is always at the expense of the weaker nations. The resolution of disputes, in Europe, resulting from the second World War was implemented through a series of agreements which were not at the expense of one country to another for they were based on the balance of power in that area, but in Indochina imperialism has failed to force the Vietnamese people to accept a solution which is favorable to imperialist interests or the interests of the Saigon government. This imperialist failure has caused imperialism to broaden the scope of its armed aggression to include Laos and Cambodia. This move took place in the face of the determination of the people of Indochina, with the support of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, to carry the task of national liberation to its final completion.

The national liberation movement in the Middle East is suffering from a sharp subjective crisis, whose origins go back to the class nature of the leadership of the movement. A leadership which is of a petit-bourgeois nature and which is unable to draw a revolutionary program which will subordinate the production front to the fighting front and is unable to adopt a theory of "armed people" who fight along side conventional forces — long term people's liberation war — on all the Arab land in order to defeat imperialism and to achieve the tasks of the new democratic national liberation revolution in the Middle East. The solution of the Middle East problem, as a result of that subjective weakness, comes at the expense of the people of the area and at the benefit of Israel and imperialism.

We can see, from all the preceding, that the international revolutionary movement and the national liberation movement throughout the world are suffering from many difficulties and problems. These provide imperialism with the ability to advance its blows and attacks against these fronts, as well as, wage it limited, private wars.



This does not mean that the future is on the side of imperialism and its attacks. The future will, inevitably, be on the side of the world socialist revolutionary forces and the forces of national liberation throughout the world. What all this means is that instead of defeating imperialism in a relatively short period, imperialism will be able to live longer as the result of these conditions which the revolutionary and national democratic movements are now going through over the world.

Q. What is the nature of the relationship between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, not just concerning the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP), but concerning the whole Palestinian resistance movement?

A. Here we must start with the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) as an organization committed to an advanced Marxist-Leninist position. The Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) has many critical observations of the Soviet Union's direction in the international Communist movement, and also about the Chinese direction in the international Communist movement, as well as both of their directions on the problems of national liberation and the problem of the East, internationally. We can say, ideologically, that our position on the relations and struggles within the international Communist movement is closer to that of the Vietnamese and Koreans and we are always ready to pursue that advanced ideological line. I am unable to give any information on the practical relations with the Soviet Union or People's Republic of China, but there are some organizations that have relations with the Soviet Union. It is strange, though, that our Chinese comrades presently have good relations with the rightist wing of the resistance, particularly represented by Fateh.

Although the Soviet Union supports the United Nations resolution and its implementation, we should not consider the Soviet Union as one of a front with the imperialists and colonialists. We should be Marxists in our analysis of the Soviet Union and the countries in the socialist camp which follow the Soviet line in their relations to the Middle East problems and the international problems.

Those positions are the results of the contradictions between the economic and social structure (state apparatus) in those countries and their international revolutionary commitment to anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist world revolutions and their problems.

Those contradictions exist, until today, in the interests of changing the proletarian internationalist principles of common struggle against imperialism and colonialism to the benefit of the developing subjective interests. Subjective interests which are the outcome of the general economic and social development of those countries and which are also the result of the assertion of the state apparatus in those countries.

Q. What is the nature of the relationships between the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) and the Communist parties throughout the Arab world? What are the relationships with the trade unions in the Arab world, especially in light of the fact that the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) is the organization which spoke of class struggle more than any other organization and in some cases intervened directly in that class struggle?

First, the Arab Communist parties in the area, with the exception of the Sudanese Communist party which is presently being subjected to a campaign of repression and persecution, are in general

reformist, social democratic parties which have adopted a position of a reformist nature toward many of the problems of the area and the world. Generally, the Arab Communist parties, among the ranks of international Communism, adopt the Soviet Union's line in their understanding of the problems of national liberation and world socialist revolution.

Our relations with these movements and these parties are confined within a limited framework and it is difficult to develop a strong relationship with them for this depends on the development of these parties of revolutionary positions toward the current problems placed upon the Arab revolutionary movement.

Our relation with the Sudanese Communist party is much stronger because the Sudanese Communist party is taking a more correct and revolutionary position, more than any other Arab Communist party, toward the problems of national democratic revolution in the Sudan. Further, the Sudanese Communist party, in its internationalist relations, is taking a semi-critical position of, and is not dogmatically committed to, the Soviet Union's line.

Second, concerning the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine's (DPFLP) relationships with the trade unions; we must thoroughly understand that the worker's unions in our country are controlled by an ideologically corrupted worker's aristocracy. An aristocracy corrupted by the prevailing petit-bourgeois culture in the Arab national liberation movement.

These leaderships are not revolutionary leaderships. Our relation with the Arab working class comes about because the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) is committed to the proletarian ideology and we present the national liberation problems from their true revolutionary source and not as a result of a subjective wish.

The introduction of the class struggle in the national democratic revolution and the achievement of the tasks of the national democratic stage in the Arab countries necessitates a clear definition of the true class allies set apart from the class enemies who are tied to imperialism and colonialism. If we do not clearly define the allies, we will find ourselves faced with the big feudal and bourgeois comprador forces in our countries, as well as, faced with the omnipresent rightwing of the petit-bourgeoisie, who assume a class role based on positions which are tied to imperialism and colonialism, and who exist for the protection of the total interests of imperialism and colonialism and who are hostile to the forces of national liberation and the cause of the national democratic revolution.

The national struggle, at this point, against colonialism, Zionism, and reaction in the area is tied, by necessity, to the class struggle against the class forces tied to imperialism and colonialism. Class forces who act, for their own interests, as a watch dog, and who constitute a historical guarantee of security, for the Zionist movement.

These questions are part of the two interviews made by the Vietnamese Solidarity Committee in Milan and the representative from the Italian newspaper, Manifesto in June 1971.

It is the duty of all revolutionaries, progressives and patriots to:

- Support the resistance movement's left, represented by the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP)
- Thus enabling it to crush all submissive and defeatist conspiracies
- And enabling it to carry the armed struggle against the Zionist enemy and the Jordanian puppet regime.

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Interview with PF



A struggle has been in progress for the last six years to free the people of the Arab Gulf from domination by Britain and by a group of local sheikhs and their emirs maintained in power by the British.

The Arab Gulf is a strand of emirates and sultanates strung along the southern and eastern edges of Saudi Arabia — among them Bahrain, Qatar, and the trucial states of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Qaiwain, Fujāira and Ras al Kaima, all facing Iran across the narrow waters of the gulf, and the Sultanate of Oman, with its mountainous southern province of Dhofar stretching along the coast of the Arabian Sea.

Though oil of the Gulf fuels the modern machines of the advanced industrial nations, and is a rich source of profit for American and British oil companies, most of the people of the emirates and sultanate themselves live in primitive conditions, as nomadic or semi-nomadic herdsmen and peasants with a very rudimentary agriculture, and most of them are extremely poor. This irony is preserved by an exotic tyranny, with an Arabian Nights quality and British army officers, political agents and direction.

A journalist and recent traveler to the Gulf, Chris Kutschera, wrote of the Oman of Sultan Said Ibn Taimur: "The clock of history was stopped at a standstill sometime in the middle ages. Everything, in all practical manners of speaking, was forbidden. The inhabitants of the coast were forbidden to travel inland. Those of the inland valleys could not go to the coast or even from one valley to another. None was allowed to go to the province of Dhofar. There were, in all Oman and Dhofar, three primary schools . . . and not a single secondary school. Students who wanted to pursue their studies had to leave their country illegally and start a long life of exile in the (other states of the) Arabian Gulf or Kuwait.

"It was forbidden to build new houses, or to repair the old ones, forbidden to install a lavatory or a gas stove, forbidden to cultivate new land or to buy a car without the sultan's permission. None could smoke in the streets, go to the movies or beat drums; the army used to have a band, but one day the sultan had the instruments thrown into the sea . . . Not a single paper was printed in the country. All political life was prohibited and the prisons were full."

Since the early nineteenth century, British imperialism has dominated the area, holding the local semi-feudal sheikhs in a kind of vassalage and using them to keep the people in check. Originally Britain intervened in the area to secure the lucrative trade routes between England, East Africa and India, and to thwart competitors for commerce. Today in addition to having strategic interests in the region, British imperialism exploits the Gulf area for oil; the British hold 30 percent of the oil concessions in the area as a whole, and British Shell monopolizes 85 percent of the Omani concession.

The insurgency in the Gulf confronts a British Empire which has wanted to a flicker of its former splendor, and maintaining even that small spark is a strain on the energies of the floundering British economy. The Conservative government announced in February 1971 that it planned to withdraw British forces from the Gulf by the end of 1971, in accordance with the program drawn up by the Wilson government in 1968 to withdraw forces from East of Suez.

So the British policy in the Gulf now is an attempt to maintain British interests there as economically as possible by making a transition from imperialism to neo-imperialism. This policy has two main aspects: the first involved putting a new face on the regime of the Sultanate of Oman by the coup which replaced the Sultan Said Ibn Taimur with his son Qabus in order to create an illusion of reform, and thereby co-opt the revolt. The second is engineering the "Federation of Arab Emirates", to band together the rulers of six mini-states, while preventing real political unity for the Gulf area as a whole. British influence would be maintained through arrangements for economic "advice" and military assistance.

Standing over the shoulder of the British is the United States. The U.S. has powerful interests in the Gulf which revolution there threatens. U.S. corporations monopolize 54 percent of the oil in the Gulf zone, but the area is vital to imperialism not only as a source of direct profit, but also for strategic reasons. Sixty-seven percent of all the capitalist oil reserves in the world are located in this part of the world. Oman and the trucial states control access to the waters of the Arab Gulf (also called the Persian Gulf), through which Iranian, Kuwaiti, Saudi and Iraqi oil is transported. The oil is vital to run the economies of U.S. allies in western Europe and Japan — crucial to the economy of the whole capitalist world.

U.S. pressure against the revolution in the Gulf is exercised primarily through Saudi Arabia, where the U.S. has 100 percent of the oil concessions and virtually unlimited power over the government, and through Iran, where the U.S. maintains the dictatorial Shah in power.

Saudi Arabia and Iran are the regional bases of opposition to the Gulf revolution. The Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf has declared that, "Since Britain announced its planned withdrawal from some provinces in the northern part of the Gulf, the number of American warships in the Gulf harbors has increased, at a time in which military help from the United States to Iran and Saudi Arabia has considerably increased and American bases on the Arabian peninsula and Iran were reinforced."

The Dhofar Liberation Front began armed struggle in the mountains of Dhofar on June 9, 1965. Gradually a revolutionary base was carved out in Dhofar, and at its second congress in September, the Dhofar Liberation Front resolved to change its name to the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf, and to extend armed struggle throughout the Gulf. The PFLOAG was bolstered by the victory of South Yemen the previous year in ousting the British colonialists. In addition to the political force of the example of a neighboring country with very similar conditions which freed itself from colonialism by guerilla warfare, the liberation of South Yemen gave rebels in the adjacent Dhofar mountains access to supplies.

Now ninety percent of Dhofar has been liberated, and armed insurrection has broken out at other points in the Gulf. The towns have been rocked by strikes and demonstrations.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf has its roots in the Arab Nationalist Movement, the pan-Arab organization which also gave rise to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The PFLOAG declared in its congress last June that it "abides by the necessity of establishing a mass revolutionary party to lead the revolution through all stages of development guided by the fundamental and scientific theory, Marxism-Leninism, for serving the interests and aims of the broadest toiling and poor masses in the society."

The following interview was conducted with two spokesmen for the PFLOAG, Comrades Mohammed and Ghazi.

* * * * *

What is the current state of the struggle in the Gulf? Maybe you could begin by speaking about the conditions in the liberated areas in Dhofar?

Comrade Mohammed: Ninety percent of Dhofar can be considered liberated. The Front has been able to do many new things in these liberated zones: it has formed popular councils to solve the problems of the people, freed the slaves, revolutionized and liberated women, established schools, centers to fight illiteracy, and health centers, constructed roads, and reservoirs for the people, transformed the people's communities from pastoral to agricultural, and mobilized the people of the area . . .

In these liberated zones, Britain had made no attempt at social change, so the Front started from zero.

Comrade Ghazi: During the third congress of the Front June 3 to 9, 1971 the Front decided to transfer landownership from the previous system of private ownership to collective ownership. The Front also established popular councils to govern the liberated zones, not only to solve the problems of the people of the area. In the third congress, the Front also passed resolutions abolishing slavery and the bride price.

This is in brief the situation in the liberated zones.

How do the agricultural committees function? To what extent has the economy been changed from a pastoral to an agricultural one? (The economic life of most people in Dhofar is nomadic and pastoral.)

Comrade Mohammed: We cannot say that the transformation from a pastoral to an agricultural way of life is complete. We cannot claim this. This is the seventh year of the struggle of the Front, and the Front has been continuously fighting for the transformation to an agricultural economy. We can say that there have been many positive steps in this direction.

The agricultural committees are working on this change of ownership in property from private to communal. The committees are also participating in building agricultural communes and in organizing the agricultural zones in the different areas.

We believe that the agricultural problem is one of the basic ones in the area, and a matter in which the Front has been able to achieve certain results.

What has been the effect of the elimination of the bride price in the liberated areas on the status of women and in the domination of the older members of the communities? (The bride price is the amount a man must pay to a woman's father to obtain her for marriage)

Comrade Mohammed: The decision to eliminate the bride price was not made by the Popular Front: it came as the result of struggle and new understanding. This decision was made when the women had reached a high level of political and cultural change, and when they were participating in the struggle. The decision was made after it was adopted as a demand by the women.

We didn't find an essentially negative reaction to this decision from the old people; the decision came gradually, and as a result of struggle. On the contrary, we find that this decision was welcomed in most circles.

Comrade Ghazi: Since the second congress of the Front, September 1968, the Front was working continuously to explain the necessity of liberating women from this old hindrance. It was clear that women took the initiative in many cases in raising and fighting for this demand.

LOAG Spokesmen

Women in the area were bound by many chains. They suffered first the oppression by society and the regime, second, oppression by tradition, and third, oppression by their husbands. Of course the chains by which women were bound would not permit them to participate in the movement, they had to break those chains.

The abolition of the bride price came in many gradual steps. First, it was decided that the price would not be more than 150 rai (about \$30). This decision was accompanied by explanation and agitation, and was followed by another decision reducing the bride price to 100 rai. Then the third congress decided on the abolition of the bride price as the final step in this long struggle. . . .

How did the institution of slavery function before the liberation of areas in Dhofar?

Comrade Mohammed: Despite the fact that in certain treaties with the sheikhs of the area Britain claims to oppose slavery, Britain has actually during its 150 year long presence in the area continuously encouraged slavery and participated in the buying and selling of slaves.

We hardly find a family in the area which did not own a certain number of slaves, usually two or three, maybe ten. Let's keep in mind that the sheikhs of the tribe owned tens of slaves, many times perhaps fifty persons. The slaves used to be bought and sold like animals. They had to perform all the difficult work, like ploughing the land and taking care of the animals.

The special guard of the Sultan of Muscat today is basically hundreds of slaves, about a regiment, to protect the Sultan. They're British-officered, of course, and they are owned by the Sultan.

After the beginning of the revolution, one of the biggest problems facing the movement was that of slavery. During the first six years of struggle, the Front was gradually able to liberate a substantial number of slaves, especially in the liberated areas, until at last, in the third congress, a final resolution was adopted to abolish every kind of slavery in the whole land.

The former slaves are participating in the revolution now, and many of them are in the vanguard.

What is the state of the struggle in the cities and towns in the Gulf?

Comrade Mohammed: The armed revolution in the Gulf has drastically affected the consciousness of the people in the area, and specifically that of the people dwelling in the towns and cities. After years of struggle, there are numerous expressions by the townspeople of solidarity with the revolution. This solidarity was expressed by numerous strikes and demonstrations by students and workers, and these demonstrations have occurred in the majority of the cities and towns throughout the Gulf.

The most recent of these demonstrations was in the city of Muscat, capital of Oman during the first few days of September 1971. The slogans that were shouted in the streets of Muscat included demands for a raise increase for workers, the downfall of the puppet government and the complete withdrawal of foreign presence from the area.

The demonstrators killed a highranking British officer, and a member of the cabinet. One demonstrator was killed. The British officered security units used gas bombs and actually shot at the demonstrators in an attempt to crush the protest, and held hundreds of demonstrators in prison.

Many of the cities are actually in a revolutionary situation These recent demonstrations. . . represent an extension of the people of the Gulf. They represent another form of struggle against foreign presence.

What is the overall political situation in the Gulf now?

Comrade Mohammed: The whole Gulf area is facing many conspiracies, especially after the rise of the revolution. British imperialism tries to suppress the revolution militarily, but they were unable to fulfill their aim.

The revolution has been able to liberate over 90 percent of the southern part of Oman. By June 12, 1970, the revolution, under the leadership of the National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman, a group connected with the PFLOAG* had spread to the deepest part of Oman. Thus the imperialists felt that their interests were endangered by the revolution, so Britain replaced her old agent, Said Ibn Taimus, with his son Qabus, who is also an agent.

By this Britain meant to absorb, to suppress, to swallow the mass discontent and rebellion and to implement some kind of superficial changes or improvements in the country just to coopt this dissatisfaction. Actually, there is no essential or fundamental change in the sultanate. The Sultan of today is the same, and all the promises which he made to the people have not been fulfilled.

Britain divided the Gulf area into small sections in order to suppress the development of the revolution in the whole area. Thus we see that after dividing the area, Britain granted these small sections an illusion of

independence; they have given this false independence to Bahrain, for example, and to Qatar, and now it is giving this same false independence to the Sultanate of Muscat. Britain is also planning to give the union of the six Emirates an illusionary independence.

All these steps were planned with the reactionary Arab states, which are playing the role of agents, and also with the participation and assistance of the democratic bourgeois regimes in the area. ("Democratic bourgeois regimes" is usually meant to include Syria, Iraq, Libya, and the Sudan). All this was happening at the same time in which we see the conspiracy against the Arab revolutionary movement all over the Arab world.

We see that the counterrevolutionary bourgeois advance is attacking the revolutionary movements in the Sudan, in Palestine, and elsewhere. This is part of the overall plan of both the old and new imperialism in the Arab world.

What has the specific role of Saudi Arabia been in attempts to suppress the revolution?

Comrade Mohammed: The reactionary regime in Saudi Arabia is playing the major role against the revolution in the area. It is an essential partner of the reactionary movement in the Arab world, and in particular in opposition to the burning revolution in the Arab Gulf.

There are many examples of the reactionary nature of the role of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is the regime which prepares most or all of these counterrevolutionary steps which are being made in the area. Saudi Arabia devotes much of its wealth and resources to opposition to revolution in the Gulf, and organizes all forces which oppose revolution in the Gulf. Saudi Arabia is, for example arming the mercenaries to sabotage the progressive regime of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The reactionary regime of Saudi Arabia is primarily an agent of U.S. imperialism, but also cooperates with British imperialism to suppress revolution in the area.

What is the role of Iran in relation to the revolution in the Gulf?

First of all, the people of the Arab Gulf have admiration and respect for the people of Iran, and the regime of the Shah of Iran is against the aspirations of the Persian people first of all.

This regime is a base for American imperialism, which is in opposition to the Iranian people as well as to the Arab people of the area. American imperialism considers the Shah's regime as its ally in suppressing the revolutionary movement in Iran and the Arab world.

For example, Iran claims possession of Bahrein, the islands of Great and Small Tomb' and Abu Musa. These claims are in contradiction to the aspirations of the people of the Gulf area to organize themselves in one political entity. These claims are also in the interest of American imperialism: they aim at gaining new strategic positions in the area for the United States from which to oppose the revolutionary advance of the area.

Moreover, the reactionary regime of Iran is organizing networks of spies to sabotage the nationalist movement in the area. . .

How does the admission of Oman to the Arab League affect the struggle? (The Arab States voted to admit Oman to the League on Sept. 28. Only South Yemen opposed the step.)

Comrade Mohammed: We believe that the effect of the admission of Oman to the Arab League is of only secondary importance. But the admission of Oman does mean that the Arab League accepts the division of the Gulf into small entities, so it has a political, rather than an actual, effect.

We believe that the unity of the Gulf will be decided not by the Arab League, but by the Arab people of the area. . . . The existence of puppet states in the Arab League will have a negative effect on the Arab League in specific and on the Arab cause in general. . .

What is the connection between the struggle in the Gulf and the Arab struggle in general?

Comrade Ghazi: The struggle in the Gulf is linked with the struggle in the whole Arab world and is in actual fact derived from the same ideological basis, that is, a proletarian foundation. The Popular Front considers itself part and parcel of the progressive struggle in the whole area. . . .

Is the seizure of state power in Oman directly linked to, or dependent on the seizure of power in adjacent states?

Comrade Mohammed: The relationship between the seizure and maintenance of state power in the Gulf and the seizure of state power in some of the neighboring countries is a dialectical relationship. Any victory achieved by progressive forces in the Arab Gulf implies specifically a victory for progressive forces in the whole Arab World and for progressive forces in Iran.

The victory of the Palestinian revolution also means a victory for the revolution in the Gulf. The destruction of the regimes in Saudi Arabia and Iran would serve to accelerate the revolution both in the Gulf and for Palestine.

Comrade Ghazi: There is an important point in all of this, and that is that the movement in the Gulf is determined to achieve its victories by its internal strength mainly, and that means through mobilizing the people of the Gulf area.

*The National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman merged in February of this year with the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf to form the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Occupied Arab Gulf.

Jordanian Regime Dissolves Worker's Union



THE JORDANIAN REGIME DISSOLVES THE GENERAL UNION OF WORKERS

PRB — After the repeated massacres committed by the reactionary Jordanian regime against the Palestinian resistance movement and the people in Jordan, the regime started an organized attempt to disband and liquidate all mass movements in the country. Thus it declared the dissolution of the General Union of Workers in Jordan, and the unions that constitute it. Below is a translation of an article published by *Fatah*, a weekly magazine, in October 1971. It deals with the heroic role played by the Jordanian-Palestinian working class in the national and class struggle.

The tyrannical regime in Jordan undertook the dissolution of the General Union of Workers in Jordan (GUWJ) and all the workers unions constituting it. Creating at the same time an ad hoc committee to be in charge of workers affairs. This move on the part of imperialist agents in power in Jordan comes as a climax to repressive moves against the workers' movement. It is a revenge against the patriotic movement and its role in the struggle against the reactionary regime, and the movement's support for the Palestinian revolution.

GUWJ was established in 1954, and it has a membership of approximately twenty thousand workers, who in turn are members of the following unions: Oil Refinery Workers Union, Institutional Workers Union, Electrical Workers Union, Clothing and its Subsidiaries Workers Union, Leather Industries and its Subsidiaries Workers Union, Tobacco Workers Union, Banking Workers Union, Printing Working Union, Tiles Workers Union, Construction Workers Union, General Works Workers Union, Taxi Drivers Workers Union, Delivery Cars Workers Union, Medical Storages Workers Union, Carpentry Workers Union, Restaurants Workers Union, Blacksmithing Workers Union, Amman's Municipal Workers Union, Bakeries Workers Union, and Takhlees Workers Union.

When the Palestinian revolution and the guns of its organized masses were able to break the chains of oppression from around the masses of Jordan, the workers were among the most militant groups who consolidated these gains. Some of these gains took the form of an expansion in the movement for unionization in Jordan, and the escalation and increase of its achievements on the political and social levels. On the political level the workers were organized within the ranks of the revolution. Most workers became members of the Militia, which defended the revolution for three years. In the morning they were in the factories, and at night they were at their posts. The gun became part of the life of each worker, and militancy became a characteristic of workers. On the social level, the workers were able to achieve a wide range of gains to improve their working conditions, and their wages.

The workers were always in the forefront of all the mass uprisings that Jordan witnessed since 1967, and also since September 1970. Workers were the fuel of these uprisings and their foundation. This has been the role of the workers because they constitute the basic part of revolution and a profound manifestation of the Jordanian patriotic movement. They were considered by the regime itself as being anti-Jordan's regime, especially since many patriotic elements were able to gain leading roles in the leadership of the working class.

Once the massacres of September 1970 ended, the agents began their plans that were aimed at bringing the workers down to their knees. This was witnessed in a variety of incidents:

- * the authorities undertook a campaign of arrests among union members and harassed others. This led to a number of leading union members to hide or leave Jordan.
- * the authorities forced certain factories and companies owners to expel large numbers of union members from their work.
- * a campaign of terror and torture was conducted by the authorities. Mustafa Barghash, a worker and member of the Mills Workers Union died under severe torture. Ghaleb Saeed from the Phosphate Workers Union was hanged. Jafaar al-Ashhab was imprisoned repeatedly and forced to resign from GUWJ Bureau.

There are many more who have been imprisoned, expelled from work, or harassed. And yet a larger number will still undergo such repression.

Together with these oppressive moves by the authorities, which did not succeed in breaking down the unionized movement, the agents took a further step in attacking this movement and attempting to break its patriotic ties. This was through the authorities' attempt to merge unions that are similar, in one single union. This had a dual purpose. The first was to force a new election which would have enabled the authorities to use its powers to oust all patriotic elements. Especially when candidacy for union offices since September 1970, required the approval of the Intelligence Service for each and every candidacy. Secondly, to gradually move away GUWJ from its close ties to the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) that has its headquarters in Prague, and tie it to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) which has its headquarters in Brussels, and is controlled by the CIA. Bearing in mind that the unions which are "similar" and which the authorities wanted to merge with the original unions belong to ICFTU, and did not carry any weight among the workers. Jordan's workers resisted the establishment of any ties with ICFTU, the CIA union.

Last September was the authorities deadline for the merging of unions. The government threatened to dissolve any union that refused such merging. Yet the deadline expired without the unions submitting to the orders of the authorities. The only merger was between the Oil Refinery Workers Union and that of the Oil Workers Union. However, when the elections were held the results were far from what the authorities wanted.

Oppression did not succeed, merging did not succeed, and the workers were not brought down to their knees. Thus the authorities had to deal directly with the case and decided to ban and dissolve GUWJ and all its constituting unions. If formed an ad hoc governmental committee to "cook" an election that would be agreeable to the authorities. It should be noted that this repressive move was taken for the first time, for even during the darkest periods pre June 1967 the government did not undertake such action.

What is behind all this? And what are the goals of the authorities? There are two main goals. The first is to deliver a blow to the patriotic movement through a move against the workers' movement which constitute the more outstanding, active, capable, and dynamic elements of the patriotic movement. The government hopes to put the workers' movement under its control and to appoint its agents and spies as fake leaders. Secondly to tie the unions with the imperialist ICFTU, and to dismantle its relations with WFTU.

Through all this the authorities is hoping to establish barriers to separate the workers in Jordan from any national or patriotic relations, and to prevent any fermentation of such relations for they would present a danger to the regime. At the same time such moves are also aimed at pleasing the authorities imperialist masters by tying Jordan's workers to ICFTU which is controlled by imperialists.

The conspiracy facing workers in Jordan aims at eliminating the workers' movement, and the crippling of their interests and patriotic aspirations. It requires from all Arab workers, and all militant workers of the world, a serious and solid stand against this criminal conspiracy. Twenty thousand workers in Jordan are facing hunger and oppression.

Twenty thousand from Arab workers, and world militant workers, are facing the threat of elimination of all their achievements which they gained throughout the last eighteen years by their sweat and blood.

Arab workers, workers of the world, unite — twenty thousands of your brothers and comrades are awaiting your decisive decisions and solidarity.

Arab workers, workers of the world, unite — and give solidarity to the workers in Jordan in the face of this aggression, in the face of workers enemies, enemies of human beings aspirations for freedom and liberty.

The Policy of Open Bridges

The Economic Effects of the Policy of Open Bridges

PRB — With this study (abridged and footnotes removed) by F.H. Basisu, published by *Shu'on Filistenyah* (Palestinian Affairs), Vol. 1, no. II, May 1971, we are continuing our discussion on Israel's economic exploitation of the occupied territories, and the resulting new economic situation.

This study is restricted to the economic effects of the policy of open bridges — without a comprehensive discussion of the political, social, psychological and military effects which are in favor of Israel.

The masses of the Western Bank have been maneuvered by the creation of a prosperous economic life that would benefit all the classes of society, leading to the decline of the revolutionary movement against occupation and the state of Israel. This policy has achieved many of its targets, to the interest of Israel and the Jordanian regime, through the subsidence of the revolution in the West Bank and stabilization of the prices of consumer goods in the East Bank, as inflation would cause resentment under a high unemployment level.

Introduction

The maintenance of open Jordanian bridges to the occupied West Bank following Israeli occupation of this area has been one of the noticeable phenomenon since the aggression of 1967 that has not been studied. It is important to realize the consequences of their closing by either Israeli or Jordanian authorities. Keeping the bridges open means continued mobility of the transactions of production and commodities between the occupied territories and the East Bank (Jordan), within the policies of Jordan and Israel regarding limitations on the freedom of transactions across the bridges. Any move to close these bridges would put certain pressures on the directions of the Jordanian economy as a whole (East and West Banks).

The main goal of this study is to examine the general economic results of the present policy of open Jordanian bridges, and the economic situation that would be created by their closing, for the two banks and the Israeli economy.

I. The Economies of the West Bank

A. The economy of the West Bank and the Jordanian economy.

In 1966, the population of the West Bank was 981,000, forming 47 percent of the total population of Jordan. The cultivatable land amounted to 32 percent of the total cultivatable area in the country. Yet it represents 80 percent of land specialized in fruits in Jordan, 45 percent of the area specialized in vegetables, 25 percent of grain lands and 35 percent of the total number of livestock in Jordan.

The West Bank's share of Jordan's gross domestic product, according to the 1959-65 average, was as follows: agriculture, 34-40 percent; industry, 18-20 percent; construction 30-35 percent; electricity and water, approximately 31 percent; transportation, 45-50 percent; commerce, 40-45 percent; banking and insurance, 35-40 percent; public administration and defense, 15-20 percent; and house ownership, 41 percent.

In addition, the West Bank produces 80-90 percent of olive oil, which is important in the industries of export and agriculture. Moreover, this area is the principal source of tourism and foreign exchange transfers from its citizens abroad. Before June 1967, tourism in the West Bank amounted to 80-90 percent of the total earnings in Jordan, while foreign exchange transfers reached 90 percent, thus totalling 68 percent of earnings from exports in services in 1966. Furthermore, the West Bank is a market for Jordanian industrial products such as petroleum, cement, textiles, hides, and soap, which are manufactured mainly in the East Bank. It is a client of the services including commerce, finance and transport, as well.

B. The West Bank and the Israeli economy.

The development of Israeli's agricultural sector is obstructed by the scarcity of land and water. For this reason efforts are concentrated on intensive farming and increasing the production of fruits and vegetables for local industry and export. In the West Bank, agricultural development though above the level of other underdeveloped economies, is lower than the level of growth of Israeli agriculture. This enables Israel to develop agriculture in the West Bank, facilitated by the readiness of West Bank farmers to accept change. It is possible for Israel to introduce intensive farming, especially in the region of Alagwar that enjoys high productivity. In addition, it can introduce the cultivation of industrial and export products such as cotton, tomatoes, egg plant, tobacco and sesame.

In commerce there is the possibility of exporting West Bank products to the rest of the world through Israel, especially vegetables, and importing some agricultural products from Israel. On the other hand, industry in the West Bank is at the first stage of development, i.e., mainly agricultural industries and handicrafts.

This means the creation of a vital market for Israeli industry replacing West Bank imports from the East Bank and abroad. As wages in the West Bank are below those in Israel, it is profitable to utilize Arab labor in Israeli agricultural and industrial enterprises, thus alleviating the rise of wages inside Israel and compensating for the relative shortage of employable labor, especially in times of mobilization.

C. The economy of Gaza

The Gaza strip is characterized by relying heavily on the agricultural sector in production and employment. Agriculture contributes about one

third of the gross product and provides a high percentage of total employment. It produces citrus, mainly for export, along with other fruits and vegetables, as shown in Table One.

Citrus constitutes the main source of foreign exchange. Exports of citrus fruits in 1963 amounted to 89 percent of total exports. The prices of citrus in Gaza are lower than in Israel by 25 to 40 percent.

Gaza exports many commodities to the East Bank, such as citrus, nuts, dates and fish, through Jordanian open bridges.

Table One

	Value (in I.L. thousands)	Quantity (in tons)
Output	52,300	—
Total Agricultural Products	39,530	—
Field Products	700	—
Vegetables	7,600	33,000
Melons	2,050	8,000
Olives	1,180	1,570
Citrus	22,400	92,200
Other Fruits	5,600	14,700
Livestock & Its Products	11,700	—
Meat	4,150	1,900
Milk	3,700	7,800
Fish	2,800	3,700
Other	1,050	—

II. Israeli Economic Policy in the West Bank

Israel is pursuing a policy that aims at:

- Developing the West Bank economy by reducing unemployment and encouraging agricultural, industrial, and commercial enterprises. The Israeli authorities think that it is easier to deal with a working people than with unemployed masses.
- Integrating the West Bank with the Israeli economy and directing its growth according to the needs of Israel's consumption, industry and exports. At present, Deputy Premier Yigal Allon thinks that integration of the economies of Israel and the West Bank will entail financial burdens for Israel. At any rate, Israeli economic policy is essentially one of cooperation and integration between the Israeli economy and the occupied areas.
- Gradually diminishing the dependence of the West Bank on the economy of the East Bank in both marketing and investment.

A. The agricultural policy: aims.

1. The gradual decrease of the reliance on the East Bank in marketing. Thus the areas allocated for the cultivation of melons and other goods which are sold in the East Bank are reduced. So they are trying to establish specialization in certain products. Israel's Department of Agriculture prepared a plan for agricultural production in the West Bank in case of a sudden closing of the bridges. For every product exported to the East Bank, the planners found a new market which could be utilized in the event that the bridges be closed. These products include tomatoes, citrus, grapes, and olives. Tomatoes have a market in Israel for consumption and industry, while citrus could be exported to Europe and partially used in industry. Grapes may be dried and partly sold in Gaza and olives have a market in Europe.

2. Meeting the needs of the Israeli economy for consumption and industry, to replace imports from abroad. In view of this, the Israeli administration is encouraging the growing of cotton, sesame, tobacco and tomatoes for industry, as well as grain and peas for local consumption, and export commodities such as vegetables, citrus, nuts, and cotton. Since 1968, practical steps have been taken by Israeli authorities for such purposes as making West Bank agriculture satisfy the needs of the Israeli markets.

3. Developing the agricultural sector in the West Bank for employment and local consumption and raising the income of farmers. The plan concentrates on the cultivation of fertile lands such as Al-Agwar and specialization in products that employ much labor and goods required by Israel or for export. Accordingly, Israel is training agricultural specialists from the people of the West Bank and helps the farmers by giving them seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides.

B. Financial policy.

The West Bank has continued to follow Jordan's tax system with a few changes in tax rates to conform to that of Israel. For example, the tax on the production of soap, glass, and plastic rose from 7.5 percent to 15 percent while the tax on textiles rose from zero to 15 percent.

A budget is prepared and approved by the Israeli Knesset for the West Bank and loans are given to municipalities through twenty-two local councils. Each council sends a financial report every month to the military authorities and carries out activities according to the budget. Also, the Israeli financial year, which starts in April and ends in March, has been adopted. Most of the West Bank budgets are financed from the surplus of the Israeli budget, while only one quarter is financed from local sources of the West Bank. In 1969-70, 162.3 million I.L. were allocated to the occupied lands, of which only 24 percent were covered from income of the occupied areas. See Table Two.

Table Two

	I.L. Million
Revenue from real estate and business	1.7
Taxes on production of cigarettes, liquor and others	15.8
Indirect taxes	7.6
Transport and court fees	3.2
Taxes on property and business	2.7
Revenue from mail, telephone and loans	8.0
TOTAL	39.0

The economic targets are getting a smaller share of expenditures than social targets or administrative requirements. Economic enterprises took 18.7 percent of total expenditures in the West Bank in 1968-69 and 1969-70, while administrative costs were 22.5 percent, social requirements 58.8 percent and 55.6 percent of the two budgets, as shown in Table Three. An Israeli wishing to invest in the occupied areas is granted a loan from the Bank of Industrial Development amounting to half the investment, carrying an interest of 9 percent, which is lowest in Israel for such loans.

Table Three

Israeli Budget for the West Bank

Percentage	1968-69	1969-70
Targets		
Economic enterprises	18.7	18.9
Social requirements	58.8	55.6
Administration	22.5	25.5
Total	100.0	100.0

C. Banking policy

This policy works for the gradual integration of the West Bank and Israeli economies, to isolate the West Bank from its banking commitments to the East Bank, and to create a market for the Israeli banks. In view of this, the Israeli authorities do not like the branches of Jordanian banks to resume their activities. Because of international pressure, Israel allows these branches to settle their accounts with the head offices in Amman in order to become independent banks. There is a direct supervision by the superintendent of banks. Israel prohibits any deals between the banks if they are to the interest of any state that doesn't have relations with Israel.

Loans are given for financing public enterprises and services more easily than for commerce. Whereas non-commercial loans are granted for eight years with an interest of six percent, commercial loans are for five years at eight percent.

D. Employment policy.

A principal problem facing Israel since 1967 is the shortage in skilled labor, due to mobilization and nearly full employment. For this reason Israel is using the Arab labor force to satisfy the requirements of economic development under the circumstances of war and mobilization, especially since wages in the West Bank are much lower than those in Israel. Therefore, labor bureaus were opened in Hebron, Ram Allah, Janin, Kalkeliah, Toulkarm, Nablus and Bethlehem. These bureaus register job-seekers and send them to work in public projects such as highways, maintenance of schools and hospitals, while inside Israel they work in citrus planting, construction, and light industry.

On February 2, 1970 there were twenty thousand Arab laborers in Israel, fourteen thousand of which came from the West Bank. As Arab labor comprises only a small portion of the work force in Israel, it does not pose a competitive substitute for Israeli labor.

III. Trade Across the Bridges

With the opening of the Jordanian bridges, trade between the two Banks was resumed on a large scale. This was influenced by the trade between Israel and the West Bank.

A. Israeli trade with the West Bank

In August 1967, Israel adopted a policy of free trade, importing goods to the West Bank, thereby creating a new market for Israeli manufactured goods. Two months later this same policy was extended facilitating movement of goods from the West Bank to Israel, with the exception of agricultural products, due to the difference in their prices. The price level is lower in the West Bank and creates strong competition to Israeli agricultural production.

In 1969, trade movement between the two regions was 21 percent higher than in 1968. Imports to the West Bank from Israel rose 29 percent, thus bringing the total of manufactured imports 48 percent above the 1968 level. Manufactured products constituted 83 percent of the total imports of the West Bank and 82 percent in 1969.

Imports of agricultural products from Israel are decreasing somewhat. The West Bank imports mainly textiles, plastics, hides and petroleum products. During 1969, exports of the West Bank to Israel dropped 8 percent as a result of Israel's policy against buying agricultural goods from the West Bank. At the same time, industrial exports rose 3 percent, consisting mainly of historical antiques, handicrafts and stones. The agricultural exports of the West Bank included olives, grapes and cucumbers, which formed 13 percent of their total output.

There has been a surplus trade balance for Israel, increasing from 9.2 million dinar in 1968 to 18.9 in 1969, or 105 percent. Industrial products are

Table Four

Trade Statistics for the West Bank in Million Dinars

	December 1967	July 1967	January 1968	June 1968	December 1968	July 1968	January 1969	June 1969	December 1969
Trade between the East and West Banks									
East Bank's exports to the West Bank	3.6	3.4	3.9	7.3	4.1	3.8	7.9	7.9	4.4
Agricultural Products	0.1	0.5	1.3	1.8	1.2	1.3	2.5	1.7	1.1
Industrial Products	-	0.4	0.9	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
East Bank's imports from the West Bank	-	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.5	5.4	5.4	3.3
Agricultural Products	3.5	2.9	2.6	5.5	2.9	2.5	3.0	3.0	23.3
Industrial Products	1.2	1.6	1.0	2.6	1.6	1.4	3.0	3.0	19.1
Trade balance of the East Bank with the West Bank	2.3	1.3	1.6	2.9	1.3	1.1	2.4	2.4	18.9
Trade balance of the West Bank with the East Bank	-3.4	-2.4	-1.3	-3.7	-1.7	-1.0	-2.7	-2.7	-16.2
West Bank's Trade with Israel									
Exports to Israel		5.5	9.2	13.6	22.8	13.4	14.3	27.7	4.4
Agricultural Products		0.7	1.1	3.7	4.8	2.1	2.3	4.4	1.1
Industrial Products		-	0.1	1.5	1.6	0.3	0.8	1.1	3.3
West Bank's Imports from Israel		-	0.9	2.3	3.2	1.8	1.5	3.3	23.3
Industrial Products		4.8	8.1	9.9	18.0	11.3	12.0	12.0	19.1
Trade Balance of the West Bank with Israel		3.8	6.2	6.7	12.9	9.4	9.7	9.7	18.9
Trade Balance of the West Bank with the East Bank and Israel		-4.1	-7.0	-6.2	-13.2	-9.2	-9.7	-9.7	-18.9
Net Trade Balance of the West Bank with the East Bank and Israel		-0.7	-4.6	-4.9	-9.5	-7.5	-8.7	-8.7	-16.2

NOTES:

1. The statistics cover trade movement across the bridges.
2. In preparing the table we used the I.M.F. exchange note of 1 Dinar = 9.8 I.L.

the main cause of the negative balance of the West Bank. The deficit in trade is financed partly by the surplus in services in favor of the West Bank (mainly Israeli tourism and Arab labor inside Israel.)

Table Seven shows that the surplus in services financed half the trade deficit in 1969. The rest is financed by military expenditures, transfers from the Jordanian government, U.N., and foreign transfers. In view of the Israeli economic policy, trade in agricultural products is not expected to rise, while exports of industrial products from Israel to the West Bank will grow due to the underdevelopment of industry there, while the trade balance in favor of Israel is expected to increase.

B. Trade between West and East Banks

Since 1968, exports from the West Bank to the East Bank have been free and exempted from duties with the exception of products subsidized by Israel and the raw materials imported which need an export license. But imports of the West Bank from the East Bank are subject to different duties reaching, in certain cases, up to 150 percent.

Trade between the two banks increased 8 percent in 1969 over 1968 due to the growth of exports of the East Bank. Agricultural goods are a relatively more important item in the exports of the East Bank than in its imports from the West Bank. Whereas the agricultural products of the East Bank constituted 68 percent of its total exports to the West Bank in 1969, its agricultural imports formed 56 percent of total imports from the West Bank. Agricultural exports to the West Bank are losing their relative importance, while industrial exports are gaining more importance, but agricultural imports from the West Bank are rising on the relative expense of industrial imports from it. Exports of the East to West Bank in 1969 were 31 percent higher than the 1968 level, with more emphasis on industrial exports (60 percent rise compared to 31 percent for agricultural exports.) Livestock and grains are the principal exports to the West Bank. Among industrial exports are sanitary goods, glass, textiles and accessories.

East Bank imports in 1969 fell 2 percent below the 1968 level due to the decrease of imports of industrial products from the West Bank. About 40

percent of the West Bank's agricultural output was sold to the East Bank while 53 percent was consumed locally and 7 percent exported to Israel in 1968-69, as shown in Table Eight.

The East Bank's main imports from the West Bank are agricultural goods like tomatoes, cucumbers, melons, citrus, grapes and olives and industrial products such as vegetable oil, soap, olive oil and matches. There has been a surplus trade balance in favor of the West Bank. This surplus fell one million dinar in 1969 below the 1968 level reaching 2.7 million dinars, compared with 3.7 in 1968.

It seems that trade between the two banks won't expand because of Israel's policy of reducing West Bank's products dependence on the market of the East Bank and finding outside markets. Israel also discourages the importation of industrial products by West Bank from Amman. Agricultural products will continue to form the bulk of West Bank exports to the East Bank.

Table Six

Trade of West Bank and Israel in Agricultural Products (Tons)

	Production 1968-69	Sales in Israel	Percentage
Olives	75,000	10,000	13
Grapes	36,000	5,000	14
Cucumbers	10,000	1,000	10

Table Seven

Israel's Balance of Services with Occupied Areas, 1968 (Million Dinars)

Israeli exported goods and services	21.5
Israeli imported goods and services	16.1
Deficit in goods and services	5.4
Exported goods	16.1
Imported goods	5.4
Deficit in goods	10.7

IV. The Economic Effects of the Policy of Open Bridges

A. General economic effects on the East Bank.

Movement of trade across the bridges helped the East Bank to satisfy its needs for fruits and vegetables. Despite lack of cultivation in the Al-Agwar region due to the military circumstances the other areas are still producing. The post-1967 rise in agricultural prices in the West Bank due to the relative scarcity of labor starting work in Israel, higher wages, and new taxes, was reflected in the East Bank markets.

The West Bank is especially important on account of its winter output of fruits and vegetables that cannot be imported from neighboring Arab states. The transport of agricultural products from the West Bank helped to maintain the supply of agricultural goods in the East Bank despite the non-cultivation of Al-Agwar. This relieved the pressure on the East Bank to buy elsewhere at higher prices. Free passage of industrial goods kept supplying the East Bank with olive oil, soap, vegetable oils and matches, and was a source of revenue to the government through duties. This helped to alleviate the recess in economic activities that occurred after 1967. The transport of goods from the East Bank to the West Bank mainly through exports provided industry there with raw materials at a cheaper price than would have been possible through trade with Israel.

Table Eight

Marketing of West Bank Agricultural Products, 1968-69

	Production (Thousand Tons)	Sales in West Bank	Sales in East Bank	Sales in Israel
Tomatoes	43	35	8	—
Cucumbers	10	7	2	1
Melons	30	15	10	—
Oranges	45	21	24	—
Grapes	36	26	5	5
Olives	75	25	40	10

This transit activity revived trade in the East Bank and was a source of customs duties. This led to a slight pressure on Jordan's foreign reserves of only 2 percent of foreign exchange holdings in 1967. The surplus of the West Bank constituted 9 percent of the East Bank's total deficit with the rest of the world in 1968. This deficit is financed by Jordanian dinars without pressure on foreign exchange holdings.

There have been a few banking activities that helped to moderate the recess in banking activities in the East Bank. The smuggling of large sums of Jordanian and foreign currencies into the West Bank increases brokerage activities and prevents the Jordanian economy from investing this money in productive enterprises that would create a balanced economy. The high profits of money smuggled from the East Bank to the West Bank encourages investment in money rather than of productive investment.

B. Economic effect on the West Bank.

The West Bank has been able to sell the surplus of its agricultural production in the East Bank market, creating income in the agricultural sector of the West Bank, employing 35 percent of their entire labor force (and holdings are not feudalistic but distributed in small holdings). Had the bridges been closed, agricultural production would have faced a slump

which would hurt all the other economic sectors in the West Bank, as Israel doesn't encourage the cheap agricultural products of the West Bank to enter its market. Transport of Gaza agricultural products through the West Bank to the East Bank has given rise to a transit trade in the West Bank, thereby adding to the income. The West Bank was able to secure its needs of grain and sheep from the East Bank that would otherwise have had to be imported from Israel at higher prices. Industrial raw materials were obtained through the East Bank at moderate prices. The money transfers of the Jordanian Government and the U.N. to their employees in the West Bank and the transfers of Jordanians working abroad, have maintained the standard of living in the West Bank.

C. The economic effects on Israel.

Israel's policy aimed at making the West Bank a market for its manufactured goods and some agricultural products. Due to differences in price level, Israel discouraged the importation of agricultural products from the West Bank, but preferred to send the West Bank agricultural surplus across the river to the East Bank. At the same time it imposed duties and regulations on the movement of industrial goods, reducing the movement of

industrial goods from the East Bank to the West Bank and keeping the West Bank market for Israeli industrial products. Thus, imports of manufactured goods from the East Bank amounted to only 4 percent of Israeli manufactured imports in 1968, as shown in Table Six.

The result was a trade model between the West Bank and Israel in favor of the latter and another between the West Bank and the East Bank with a trade balance for the former, causing the flight of Jordanian money to the West Bank. This also formed a stream of revenue for the Israeli treasury, through duties and other fees levied for crossing the bridges, which is estimated at 2 million dinars a year. Israel is trying to ship some of its agricultural surplus such as citrus, cucumber and potatoes to the East Bank and get some of its needs like grain and sheep through Jordan.

V. The Economic Effects of Closing the Bridges

A. The East Bank.

1. Deprivation of the fruits, vegetables and industrial products of the West Bank. Although some fruits can be bought from Syria cheaply, the rest, and especially winter output, cannot be replaced. This will cause higher prices and exert pressure on foreign exchange holdings in the East Bank.
2. Economic activities will fall to a lower level.
3. Transfer of salaries by Jordan's Government to the West Bank will be stopped with negative political and social effects.
4. A fall in the level of activity of the banking system in the East Bank.

B. The West Bank.

1. In the short run it is difficult to export the agricultural surplus. More output will be offered for the local market, resulting in lower prices and in a slump first in agriculture and then in other sectors.
2. The stopping of money transfers from Jordan and abroad to the people of the West Bank will give rise to bad economic and social effects, reflected in lower purchasing power and smaller demand.
3. Commercial activities will diminish.

C. Israel.

1. Loss of revenue from customs duties on the bridges and fees for movement of people.
2. There will be the burden of marketing the agricultural surplus of the West Bank outside of Israel.
3. Import of the needs of the West Bank through Israel will deplete the foreign exchange reserves of Israel.
4. Losing the chance of trying to sell Israeli manufactured goods in Arab markets.

VI. Summary

It seems that the policy of open bridges has positive effects on the economy of both banks and on Israel.

This applies only in the short run. The result of Israel's effect on the economy of the West Bank, through a gradual rise in prices, integration into the Israeli economy, and diminishing dependence on the East Bank, will increase gains for the Israeli economy in the long run, especially if Israel succeeds in shipping its goods to Arab markets through the bridges.

the end

IMPERIALISM AND THE ISRAELI ECONOMY

LARRY LOCKWOOD

50¢

Jerusalem File

A Film Review

Aptly enough, *The Jerusalem File* was made by Sparta Films in association with Leisure Media of all things, and was produced by Ram Ben Efrain, described in the production notes as "a dynamic young Israeli" who was born on a kibbutz. The full-length feature is now beginning engagements all over the US. Between them Sparta, Leisure Media and a dynamic young Kibbutznik (military colonialism disguised as relaxing idealistic fun) have turned out a film that is not only bad as a film, but predictable politically as well. Efrain has been telling specially invited audiences to pre-release screenings that the film is not a political film, as if the story of an American student in post 1967 Jerusalem who tries to arrange meetings between young Arabs (they are never called Palestinians by the way) and young Israelis — all of them are finally shot except for the American — were something of a nursery tale. The narrow range of characters is built around political clichés. The Israelis are concerned, haunted by the Holocaust, serious but humane, idealistic and tough. The Arabs are vengeful, they sell information, they shoot each other in a power struggle between rival gangs, their children stare, are pretty, and underfed, and all Jerusalem Arabs live in abject circumstances. At one point an Arab family is turned out of its hovel for an Israeli police search, which like everything else about the Israelis is tough but idealistic: one of the cupboards is opened, but it is empty except for a couple of eggs and an old shoe. Thus the Arabs. By contrast the Israelis drip with Near Eastern mod: workshirts, jeans, sandals, posters of abstract art, baskets of fruit in the room, etc.. Of course Arabs are terrorists (Though once the young American corrects an Israeli and calls the Arabs "guerillas"), but what is more important, their terrorism has no content. It is simply terrorism for its own sake.

No matter what Efrain says, this is not a film about "young people trying to find a meaning for their lives," nor is it about the prospect of rapprochement between young Arabs and young Israelis. For one thing the film is purposely vague where it should have been clear. We never really know why the Arabs kill each other, we never know who kills the young idealists at the end, and we never know why the Israeli professor of archeology has so much political power, is perpetually angry, and is so passionate about everything. All this is left up to assumptions more easily favorable to the Israelis and unfavorable to the Arabs by the simple fact of the film's setting in occupied Jerusalem. Reminders of Israeli power are in every foot of the film from the omniscience of an obscure Israeli general who plots peace as cleverly as he once planned war, to an Israeli archeological dig at Qumran, formerly Arab territory. The interchangeability between Israeli power and Israeli fantasies of generosity, this is what the film is about.

A liberal Arab said that this film was "bad" but not as "bad" as he expected it to be. As the film begins its engagement now, Egypt has announced that it will concede two points: that Egyptian soldiers need not cross the Suez Canal, and that Egypt will meet Israel for direct negotiations (NY Times, Feb. 12, p. 12). These are Israeli demands to which Egypt has at last given in, but the irony is that Israel has just won concessions from the US on Phantom and Skyhawk jets. We were led to believe that the delivery of jets to Israel would make Israel more flexible. Instead Arab regimes become more concessive. There is nothing wrong *per se* with conceding, particularly if you are beaten, but it is one thing to concede just like that, and another to concede intelligently and purposefully. To concede that a film isn't as bad as it could have been is the same as saying "it's a good thing we still have Cairo" during the year after the Year of Decision.

A LETTER FROM THE STATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT by Samith al-Qasim

I may lose, if you will, my sustenance,
sell my clothes, my bed,
become a stone-cutter,
porter,
street sweeper,
attendant in a factory yard,
search for grains in cattle-dung
sleep naked, hungry,
but, oh enemy of the sun,
I shall never compromise,
to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist.

You may deprive me of the last inch of my land,
feed my youth to prisons,
rob my inheritance:
the furniture,
the pots and pans,
the jars,
burn my poems, books,
feed my flesh to the dogs,
haunt our village like a horrifying nightmare,
but, oh enemy of the sun,
I shall never compromise,
to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist.

You may put out the light of my night,
deny me my mother's kisses,
incite the children to curse my father, my people,
seize upon the negligence in my vigilant sorrows,
urge a coward or a mythical god
to falsify my history,
deprive my companions with false faces,
raise around me
a wall, then another, and another,
crucify my days in a humiliating stance,
oh enemy of the sun,
but, I shall never compromise,
to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist.

Oh enemy of the sun,
there are good tidings and decorations in the harbor,
ululations and splendor,
cheering and clamor,
and ardent songs, like fire in the throat,
for on the horizon a sail,
defying the wind and waves,
overcomes the dangers.
It is the return of Ulysses
from the sea of perdition,
the return of the sun, the exiled man.
I vow, to her eyes, and to his, I shall never compromise,
and to the last pulse in my veins
I shall resist,
oh enemy of the sun,
I shall resist.

Translated by M.B.A

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